

# DOWNING MUSIC

DOWNING MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS INFORMATION GUIDE

## Be a part of the fun!

Your son or daughter is invited to be a part of the Downing Music Programs! Students are able to choose from band, choir or orchestra, and with two electives, they can even pick two! Not only will students learn to perform or learn how to sing, they learn the essentials of teamwork, self-motivation, self-discipline, individual responsibility, and social skills that prove to be effective in any career, sport, or other activity.

### OUR GOALS

The Music Directors at Downing are committed to four main goals with regard to every student in the music programs. They hope that each student will allow music to help them:

1. Become a better person
2. Improve academically
3. Become a great musician
4. Develop a greater appreciation for life-long enjoyment of music.



## Why Choose Music?

Music classes at Downing are a great way to meet new friends.

Band, Choir and Orchestra have lots of fun group activities that allow students to mingle with 6th, 7th and 8th graders. Many current Downing music students have met their closest friends in the music programs. Students will learn to

play many different of styles of music, including classical, holiday, popular, traditional and folk.

Students will have many opportunities to perform individually and as a member of a large ensemble throughout the school year.



## Band



## Choir



## Orchestra

## How Much Money Will This Cost?

Fortunately **NOT MUCH!** Sure it will cost **SOME** money, but we are able to work out arrangements with a local music store and they are able to offer discounts on the purchase of an instrument, or can set you up on a monthly payment plan over the course of time.

In fact, they even offer an instrument rental program. This program is perfect for beginning students who may be “experimenting” with their commitment to something new.

The rental program protects you from investing money in an instrument while not being 100% certain that your child will continue in his or her band or orchestra instruction.

A select number of school-owned instruments are also available for student use. This may be an option if finances are a major concern to your family. Please don't let this stop your child from enjoying a great experience in music classes!

Each music class also requires an “activity fee” which covers many of the costs that may come up during the year, including t-shirts and bus fees.

Scholarships for the activity fee are available if necessary.

## How Much Time Is Required?

As a beginning music student, very little time is required outside of school. Students have several concerts and may have a few rehearsals outside of school. Beyond that, other opportunities for students to participate include solo and small group contests, as well as private lessons. Neither are mandatory, but **ARE** highly encouraged.

Students will also be required to engage in regular home practice routines, like having homework from a regular academic class. Our home practice requirements are minimal, leaving plenty of time for participation in other activities and school work.



## ABOUT GRADES

Research shows that participation in music programs will affect your child's grades for the better.

Dr. Mike Moses, former Texas Commissioner of Education, states that “Current research indicates that the fine arts, especially music, influences the brain and actually stimulates spatial intelligence. Students who participate in an arts program experience important learning transfers in academic areas.”



## STUDENTS SPEAK: WHY DOWNING MUSIC?



“We joined band because you get to hang out with your friends while making new ones. Mr. Brown and Ms. Pomponio are the most fun teachers ever! Fun, fun, and fun describes band.”

— Erika Thomson and Jackson Smith



“We love choir because we love to sing. Mrs. Davis and Mr. Newman are super nice! It's our favorite class of the day. We really like the music and hanging out with our choir friends!”

— Trevor Newell and Ashley Cook



“We love orchestra because Ms. Hardwick is the coolest teacher ever! The music is really fun and challenging. We've made tons of new friends in orchestra. It's definitely our favorite class!”

— Eva Jensen and Alex Garris

# About the Directors



## MR. BROWN

**Mike Brown** attended Baylor University and earned his Music Education Degree. While at Baylor, Mike performed with the Marching Band, the Basketball band, the Baylor Jazz Ensemble, and the Baylor Wind Ensemble. Mike was also selected as the Outstanding Music Education Student in the School of Music.

Mr. Brown's bands have earned numerous state and national awards. Mr. Brown was also selected as the Teacher of the Year for Flower Mound High School's Inaugural Year. Mike has been named to "Who's Who Among America's Teachers. In 2003, Mr. Brown was selected as The Outstanding Young Bandmaster in the state of Texas.

In his spare time, Mr. Brown loves spending time with his wife, Elizabeth and their two children, Cameron and Weston. Mr. Brown also serves as a baseball coach for FMVSA and is an avid Texas Ranger fan!



## MS. POMPONIO

**Anna Lee Pomponio** is the assistant director of bands at Downing Middle School. She is in her second year of teaching at Downing after finishing her degree in Music Education at Texas Christian University. Ms. Pomponio began her love of music in elementary school singing in the choir, and then began to play the French Horn in sixth grade. She has played as the principal horn of the TCU Wind Symphony, performing in Carnegie Hall in New York City, and with the TCU Symphony Orchestra in Puerto Rico. She was also a member of the TCU Horned Frog Marching Band, and enjoyed going to all of the football games, especially the Rose Parade and Rose Bowl!

When she is not at Downing, she loves to cook, bake, and try new and exciting restaurants in the DFW area. She is also a huge sports fan, always watching the Rangers, Stars, and the Washington Redskins. While she always keeps up with her favorite professional teams, her favorite school to watch is the TCU Horned Frogs. Go Frogs!



## MS. HARDWICK

**Bethany Hardwick** is the Director of Orchestras at Downing Middle School. She is in her third year of teaching at Downing. Ms. Hardwick's orchestras have received numerous awards, including Sweepstakes awards at UIL, and the Best in Class and Best in Festival awards at the Director's Choice Festival last year.

Ms. Hardwick is a graduate of the University of North Texas where she earned a degree in Music Education. Ms. Hardwick began playing the violin in fifth grade in San Antonio, TX. While at UNT, she performed regularly with the UNT Symphony Orchestra, UNT Mariachi Aguilas, UNT Jazz strings, and served as concert master for the UNT Repertoire Orchestra for six semesters.

Ms. Hardwick has performed regularly with several local groups, ranging from rock, to country to mariachi, on violin, electric violin, ukulele, and mandolin. In her spare time, Ms. Hardwick loves to bake, play with her dog, Milli, and curl up with a good book. She loves Harry Potter, Audrey Hepburn, chocolate, and Dr. Pepper!



## MRS. DAVIS

**Morgan Davis** is the director of the choral department at Downing Middle School. She is in her eighth year teaching, and her sixth year at Downing. Downing Choirs regularly receive Sweepstakes awards at UIL, Best in Class and Best in Festival awards, and they won the American Classics festival last year.

Mrs. Davis grew up in Deer Park, a suburb of Houston, where she was a choir student of Barry Talley. After student teaching with Jason Dove (now at Marcus HS) she became a proud graduate of Baylor University where she earned a degree in Music Education. While at Baylor she sang in their A Cappella choir, even performing for a PBS Holiday broadcast. Sic 'em!!

When not at Downing, Mrs. Davis enjoys spending time with her friends and family, her husband Jeff, and their son, Grady. She enjoys singing at church, watching reality TV, cooking, and playing with her dogs. She keeps up with Baylor sports, and enjoyed rooting for RG3 when he won the Heisman! She enjoys reading- especially Harry Potter, Twilight and The Hunger Games.



## MR. NEWMAN

**Lance Newman** is the assistant choir director at Downing Middle School. He is in his first year of teaching choir, spending his afternoons at Downing, and his mornings at Briarhill. Mr. Newman graduated from the University of North Texas with a degree in Music Education. He first took choir in the 6th grade and has enjoyed singing ever since. At UNT, Mr. Newman was a member of the UNT Chamber and Concert Choirs. He now sings with the Dallas Symphony Chorus which is scheduled to perform at the 2013 ACDA National Conference in March!

Outside of the classroom, Mr. Newman enjoys spending time with his family and his girlfriend, Nadia. He loves to watch movies, and is a giant trivia nerd. His favorite TV shows are Big Bang Theory and Jeopardy. Growing up in the Hurst-Euless-Bedford community, he also remains a diehard Trinity High School football fan. Just don't tell any Marauder fans...

# Find Your Voice

Instruments | Lessons | Rentals | Repairs



**VISIT US:**

Lewisville  
FM 3040 and Rockbrook Dr.  
360 E FM 3040 Suite 820  
(972) 315-8400  
MusicArts.com

**MUSIC  
&  
ARTS™**

FIND YOUR VOICE  
INSTRUMENTS • LESSONS • RENTALS

MusicArts.com

## NUMBERS TO NOTE

The number of points higher that music students score on standardized tests like the SAT

**89**

The percentage of the nation's major universities that report that participation in a musical organization is a higher consideration than standardized test scores for admission decisions

**70**

The percentage of college music majors who applied and were accepted to medical school

**66**

The percentage of Downing students who are involved in the music programs at Downing

**70**

## Can My Child Participate in Other Activities AND Music?

YES! Not only is participation in other Downing organizations possible, it is highly encouraged! However, it is important to remember that commitment to the music programs and practice time is necessary.

Many of the skills each student will learn in music classes (teamwork, group accountability, etc.) will be GREAT assets toward their participation in athletic programs, or any other organization.

In fact, many great athletes, actors, professional musicians, and politicians were active in music classes!

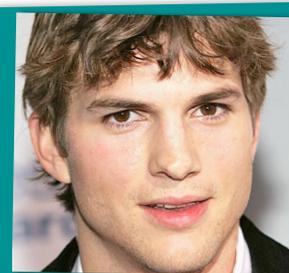
## Celebrity Musicians



Tony Hawk  
Violin



Nora Jones  
Saxophone



Ashton Kutcher  
Choir



Samuel L. Jackson  
Trumpet and French  
Horn



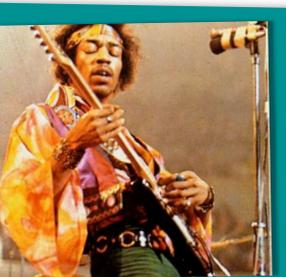
Anne Hathaway  
Choir



Dakota Fanning  
Violin



Lea Michele  
Choir



Jimi Hendrix  
Viola



Tony Stewart  
Trombone

# Make an Appointment to Choose Your Instrument



## Here's How It All Works...

...

1. Sign your child up for Band, Choir, or Orchestra and return it to your child's 5th grade classroom teacher ASAP. Students are welcome to choose fine arts for both of their electives.
2. Use the instrument and choral selection guide to help your child choose what they may be interested in. Keep in mind that there are no guarantees that a specific instrument will be a good choice for your child. The music directors will make sure your student finds an instrument or voice class they can be successful with.
3. If your child is interested in an instrumental music class, schedule an appointment for your child's instrument selection interview. You can sign up via email, or at the Parent Meeting on February 21st. During the interview, your child will be tested on their 3 favorite

instruments. This process will take about 15 minutes.

4. Make arrangements for renting your child's instrument and required supply kit. Music rental companies will be at Downing to make this process easier for you!
5. Choir classes are split by gender. Sixth graders are assigned to either the 6th Grade Boys Choir or 6th Grade Girls Choir. No audition is necessary.

### PLEASE KEEP IN MIND...

Just like a sports team, not everyone can play the same position. Not everyone who wants to play a certain instrument will be able to do so.

Instrument selection will be based on a number of things, including physical characteristics and instrument availability.

**DO NOT** immediately run out and get an instrument until you have met with the directors at one of the Instrument Selection dates. Do not purchase an instrument without first consulting one of the Downing music directors.

### IF YOU CANNOT MAKE THE DATE

Please contact the directors and we will happily make an appointment with you to find the perfect instrument for your child! Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions about the programs.

## Instrument Selection Dates

### Band:

March 19th 4-7 pm\*

\*Percussion Only

March 20th 4-7 pm

March 25th 4-7 pm

DMS Band Hall

Sign up for an appointment with the Band Directors before attending

### Orchestra:

March 26th 5-8 pm

April 4th 5-8 pm

DMS Orchestra Room

Sign up for an appointment with the Orchestra Director before attending

### Choir:

Classes are gender based.

No appointment is needed.

#### CONTACT THE BAND

Mr. Brown  
Ms. Pomponio

email: [brownmt@lisd.net](mailto:brownmt@lisd.net)  
phone number: 972-350-1456  
website: [www.downingmsband.com](http://www.downingmsband.com)

#### CONTACT THE CHOIR

Mrs. Davis  
Mr. Newman

email: [davism@lisd.net](mailto:davism@lisd.net)  
phone number: 972-350-1457  
website: [www.downingchoir.com](http://www.downingchoir.com)

#### CONTACT THE ORCHESTRA

Ms. Hardwick

email: [hardwickb@lisd.net](mailto:hardwickb@lisd.net)  
phone number: 972-350-1450  
website: [www.downingorchestra.com](http://www.downingorchestra.com)